

Court Appointed Special Advocate Newsletter

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CHILD'S VOICE IN COURT

GETTING THE WORD OUT

by La Donna Moss

Hello, CASA volunteers! As the new volunteer recruiter it my responsibility to make sure everyone - and I do mean everyone - in Maricopa County knows about the CASA Program. I want to thank all of the CASAs who have been calling me with new contacts and suggestions about how to recruit more volunteers. You are doing a great job. Keep it up.

As CASAs, you are the best source of advertising and outreach, so if your answer is yes to either of the following questions, you, too can help get the word out.

- Are you interested in speaking at your churches, companies, or other organizations about CASA? Sign up for the Speaker's Bureau!
- Do you have interesting, compelling, or good news stories to tell? Of course you do! Give them to me.
- Do you know someone I should contact? Call me at 506-3930, and I'll call them.

I am anxiously awaiting your phone calls!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!



Hugh Woodward	2	Barbara Knoles	25
Sharon Kiedrowski	9	Pat Nelson	25
Judy Flanagan	14	Lynda Pederson	26
Judy Chervenak	15	Beverly Ashley	27
Deborah Egan	19	Linda Warfield	27
Barbara Clark	21	Melanie Schuele	29
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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Jane Ascheman

The first in an on-going series of volunteer profiles is on Jane Ascheman. As a new CASA, Jane jumped right into model court and accepted a case with eight children who were all placed together. This didn't last for long! They are now in three placements all over the valley. In a complicated case that now has two CPS case workers, Jane has managed to facilitate visits between siblings and with their mother and grandmother. She has been able to coordinate communication with the CPS workers and not ask for a co-CASA because "It would just duplicate work and make it more confusing," she said.

Jane was a CASA in Kansas City, a program without much funding (and certainly not from the Lottery!) She participated in fund-raising for the Missouri program and is the first to be appreciative of the resources available to support our program in Arizona, specifically seminars and training.

Jane spent many years in nursing and after that has worked in medical and legal consulting. Just recently she started a home business privately consulting with the medical and legal community, researching medical malpractice and product liability cases and locating expert witnesses. She has been married for 26 years and has three children, Dan, Kate and Maggie.

Thanks Jane, for your commitment to the CASA Program and for giving your time to eight children in the foster care system who are lucky to have you in their lives.

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MODEL COURT BEGINS IN DURANGO

In January we announced that Model Court was beginning in the Southeast (SEF) facility in Mesa. From January through June 1999, 73 model court cases have been filed at SEF and the CASA Program has assigned 27 of them. We are gearing up to implement Model Court in the Durango facility this month. Durango received 70% of all DES filed dependency petitions. As you may recall, the Model Court process expedites dependency cases by shorting time lines for hearings and requires all parties to the case to attend the Preliminary Protective Hearing (PPH) and Conference which is set five to seven days after the petition is filed.

The CASA screening tool is now being used by the Model Court facilitators to help identify the appropriateness of a CASA assignment on a case. On some cases, we are calling CASA volunteers to take cases and attend the PPH and Conference within three to four days of the petitions being filed. On others, CASAs are being appointed a little later in the process when we are able to determine whether a CASA is definitely needed.

As we bring Model Court on board at Durango, the process will no longer be "model" but the way in which we now process all dependency petitions filed by DES. This promises a faster, more efficient system for children.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

The following have been passed and signed by the Governor.

PREVENTION

- ✦ Child Abuse; Special Plates; Fund (Chapter #71-HB 2441).
- ✦ Healthy Families (Chapter #1-SB 1001; First Special Session).
- ✦ Health Start (Transmitted to the Governor 5/7-HB 2065).

CHILD CARE

- ✦ Child Care Subsidy (Chapter #1-SB 1001; First Special Session).

CHILD WELFARE

- ✦ Adoption and Foster Care Committee (Chapter #82-SB 1114).
- ✦ Assistance Services Programs; Appropriations [includes the Homeless Youth Intervention Program] (Chapter #328 - SB 1180).
- ✦ Child and Family Services; Committee (Chapter #51 - SB 1055)
- ✦ Child Welfare Reporting Requirements (Chapter #37 - SB 1229).
- ✦ Dependency; Permanent Guardianship; Termination (Chapter #81 - SB 1109).
- ✦ Expedited Adoption (Chapter #347 - SB 1116).

- ✦ Foster Care; Children's Rights (Chapter #198 - HB 2105).
- ✦ Permanent Guardianship; Subsidy (Chapter #251 - HB 2417).

CASA SPONSORED TRAINING

July 30 & 31, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Court Appointed Special Advocate Training - New Volunteer Orientation Training is going to be held at Arizona Courts Building, 1501 W. Washington, Room 119. If you know of someone who would like to become a volunteer, please ask them to call the CASA Office at 506-4083 to begin the screening process.

August 5, 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Post Orientation Training - Attend follow-up training to the basic CASA Orientation. Topics covered will include Duties and Responsibilities of a CASA volunteer, case planning and court report writing, Title 19 eligibility and Model Court. All volunteers are welcome to come as a review or plan to attend the Model Court portion beginning at 8:00 p.m. Location: Juvenile Court Southeast Facility, 1810 S. Lewis Street, Saguaro Room. Dinner will be provided. Please RSVP by August 2nd to the CASA Office at 506-4083.

CONFERENCES

August 18-20, 1999 CWLA National Kinship Care Conference; Honoring & Preserving Family Ties - Will provide an opportunity for those concerned about kinship families to join forces to improve outcomes for children placed in kinship families. Proposals from multiple systems and constituencies within and beyond the field of child welfare are sought that highlight creative program and policy strategies and approaches to strengthening and affirming kinship families. Location: Sheraton Colony Square, Atlanta, GA. For more information contact Maryjane Link, 716-847-3743 or Gloria Patterson, 404-657-3457.

COMMUNITY SPONSORED TRAINING

July 7, Clinical Breakfast Series 1999 "Dynamics of Addiction" - Sponsored by St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center. Location: Behavioral Health Center Auditorium, Phoenix. Cost: Free. For more information contact St. Luke's at 251-8616.

August 4, Clinical Breakfast Series 1999 "Naturopathic Alternatives For Psychiatric Patient Care" - Sponsored by St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center. Location: behavioral Health Center Auditorium, Phoenix. Cost: Free. For more information contact St. Luke's at 251-8616

**THE FOLLOWING IS A PARTIAL LIST OF
SHELTERS AND GROUP HOMES IN MARICOPA
COUNTY**

Arizona Baptist Children's Services:

- ✓ Bell House: Group home in Mesa for 5 boys ages 8-16.
- ✓ Bunkhouse: Emergency shelter in Glendale for up to 20 boys ages 8-18. 8-17.
- ✓ Journey House: Group home in west Phoenix for 5 boys ages 8-16.
- ✓ Little Canyon Center: Residential treatment center in west Phoenix for 35 boys and girls ages 6-18.

Arizona's Children Association:

- ✓ Group home in Mesa housing up to 6 boys ages 8-17.

Catholic Social Services:

- ✓ Casa Linda: Group home in Sunnyslope area, for young mothers and their babies.
- ✓ Crossroads: Crisis shelter in Scottsdale for 6 girls ages 13-18.
- ✓ Springhaven: Group home in Scottsdale for 8 girls ages 13-15.
- ✓ Stepping Stone: Group home in Scottsdale for 6 girls ages 10-14.

CASS/Sunnyslope (Vista Colina Shelter):

- ✓ Transitional crisis-housing for homeless families; houses up to 30 school age youth (1st-6th grades) per week.

Child Crisis Center - East Valley:

- ✓ Crisis and long-term shelter in Mesa for children ages infant to 12.

Chrysalis Shelter:

- ✓ Scottsdale: Domestic Violence shelter in south Scottsdale; houses approx. 10 children of various ages.
- ✓ Phoenix: Domestic Violence shelter in Phoenix; houses approx. 10 children of various ages.

Crisis Nursery:

- ✓ Crisis shelter in Phoenix for up to 36 children, ages infant to 8.

Devereux Arizona:

- ✓ Residential treatment center/school in Scottsdale for up to 68 children and adolescents.

Family Support Resources:

- ✓ Bethany House: Group home for teenage girls
- ✓ Blue Sky: Long-term group home in Tempe, for 2-3 boys ages 7-13.
- ✓ Ellis House: Group home in Tempe, for 6 boys ages, 7-13.
- ✓ Four Seasons: Group home in west Phoenix for 7 girls, ages 10-13.
- ✓ Monterosa House: Group home in Glendale for up to 10 boys, ages 9-13.
- ✓ Success House: Group home in Glendale for 4 teenager mothers and their babies.

Florence Crittenton:

- ✓ Residential facility in Central Phoenix for up to 22 adolescent girls who are victims of physical and sexual abuse.

Habitat for Humanity:

- ✓ Community in south central Phoenix; 8-100 children from infant-18.

Little Shelters:

- ✓ Taylor House: Crisis shelter in central Phoenix for 9 children (boys and girls) ages 5-8.
- ✓ Amber House: Crisis shelter in Tempe for 9 children (boys and girls) ages 5-8.

My Sister's Place:

- ✓ Domestic violence shelter in Chandler for women and their young children.

Morning Star Youth Services:

- ✓ Casa Linda Shelter: Crisis shelter in Scottsdale for 8-10 girls ages 2-11.
- ✓ Casa De Angel: Crisis shelter in Scottsdale for 10 boys ages 6-12.
- ✓ Casa Cheryl: Crisis shelter in northeast Phoenix for 5 girls ages 12-18.

New Foundation:

- ✓ Treatment center in south Scottsdale for youth ages 11-18 with chemical abuse, depression, victims of physical or sexual abuse, and behavioral problems.

Pappas School:

- ✓ An elementary school in Phoenix for 500 homeless children grades K-8.

Prehab of Arizona:

- ✓ Alice Peterson Shelter (APS): Crisis shelter in Mesa for girls ages 8-18.
- ✓ Autumn House: Domestic violence shelter in Mesa for women and their young children.
- ✓ Heleman House: Group home in Mesa for 20 boys ages 12-18.
- ✓ Homestead House: Group home in Mesa for up to 14 girls who are victims of physical and sexual abuse.
- ✓ Shelter 4: Crisis shelter in Mesa for boys ages 8-18.
- ✓ Wilber Grey Shelter: Crisis shelter in mesa for boys ages 8-18.
- ✓ Willow Cottage Shelter: Crisis shelter in mesa for boys ages 8-18.

Salvation Army Family Shelter:

- ✓ Transitional crisis housing shelter for homeless families; houses up to 40 children infant to 18.
- ✓ Herberger Preschool: Preschool and daycare for up to 20 girls and boys ages infant - 5.

Save The Family Foundation of Arizona:

- ✓ A long term transitional housing shelter in Mesa for women and children. Program accommodates up to 100 children.

Sojourner's Center:

- ✓ Domestic violence shelter in South Phoenix for women and their children.

- ✓ Long term group home in north Scottsdale for 6 girls ages 13-18.

- ✓ Transitional shelter for homeless women and children for up to 9 children, boys and girls, ages infant to 18.

- ✓ Group homes in Glendale for boys ages 5-18.

- ✓ Group home in Chandler for 6 teenage girls.

- ✓ Boy's 5th Street Homes: Group home in south Phoenix for boys ages 13-18.
- ✓ Open Hands: Shelter in the west Valley for girls and boys ages 10-18.
- ✓ Young Adult Program: Group home in Phoenix for boys and girls ages 16-19.

- ✓ Central Phoenix: Day program for adolescent girls and boys.

- ✓ Shelter 1: Crisis shelter in Glendale for 8 children ages 0-6.
- ✓ Shelter 2: Crisis shelter in Glendale for 8 children ages 0-6.

- ✓ Genesis: Group home in Phoenix for up to 9 girls ages 12-17.
- ✓ Little Candles: Group home in west Phoenix for up to 10 girls ages 8-18.
- ✓ Next Step: Group home in central Phoenix for up to 10 boys ages 8-13.
- ✓ Pointe West: Group home in Glendale for up to 10 boys ages 12-18.
- ✓ Odyssey House: Transitional shelter in Phoenix for teenage boys.

Advocates Against Adolescent Suicide has information packets available. Packets available are:

- ➡ Youth Suicide Information
- ➡ Thinking Adolescent, Drugs, Sex, Etc.
- ➡ Children Who Can't Pay Attention
- ➡ Anger Packet, Children and Violence
- ➡ Self-Esteem Communication Skills
- ➡ Parenting Packet

There are many more packets available. Each packet cost is \$5.00. For more information please call AAAS at 861-1121.

Last month Lynne Krause from AASK, was kind enough to train volunteers on adoption subsidy. She has valuable experience and information and is willing to share it with CASA volunteers. Give her a call. 254-2275.

ARIZONA PREVENTION CENTER, the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), is located downtown at the Mercado and can be reached at 1-800-432-2772. For more information on alcohol and drug abuse, contact the NCADI at <http://www.health.org> or call 1-800-729-6686.



(Continued from last month's newsletter)

What if a CASA volunteer is unhappy with the judicial decision on the case? Volunteers may submit a report to the court and interested parties outlining their reasons for disagreement and include recommendations for another action. Volunteers may contact the attorney or GAL and, if they are in agreement, they could file a motion with the court noting the CASA support.

What if DES disagrees with a CASA volunteer in a staffing? CASA volunteers are parties that have been trained to advocate on behalf of children in the dependency process. The Order of Appointment (Court Order) authorizes CASA volunteers to communicate with any and all parties in order to gather information regarding children and make recommendations to the court.

Therefore, CASA volunteers formulate their opinions, concerns, and recommendations based on the information gathered. As such, CASA volunteers should feel comfortable and confident in expressing their views in staffings and in their court reports. At times, CASA volunteers recognize the different perspectives offered by DES and vice versa. Volunteers and DES case managers do not need to share the same opinion regarding a case. Volunteers need to keep in mind their role is to advocate for the best interest of children. Because DES is a key player on the dependency team, it is recommended that they continue to share information and work through the dependency process together in the most professional and courteous manner. If for any reason there are ongoing disputes among CASA volunteers and DES staff to the point volunteers can no longer work cooperatively, the CASA coordinator should be notified immediately. A meeting between the DES case manager and supervisor and the CASA coordinator and volunteer may be arranged if necessary.

There could be misunderstandings on both sides (DES and CASA volunteers) with certain issues. Sometimes it's only a matter of the county coordinator educating both parties about the roles and function of CASA and how the CASA program serves a different function than DES. In addition, some counties offer mediation services between DES staff and CASA coordinators and volunteers.

-Continued on page 5

-Common CASA Scenarios continued

What Responsibility do volunteers have in sharing information on a case no one else has? It is imperative that CASA volunteers share any and all information on cases with appropriate parties. It's also appropriate to contact both the coordinator and case manager. If the information is of legal issue, it may be important to notify the child's attorney, if there is one appointed.

If the concern needs to be elevated to the court, the CASA volunteer may prepare an addendum to the previous court report. Filing the Addendum to the court report allows all parties to be given the same information.

How do volunteers get parties to the case to return phone calls? According to the DES procedural manual, case managers are required to return phone calls with in a 48 hour time frame. If a call is not returned by a case manager within that time limit, it is appropriate for volunteers to contact the supervisor of the case manager. The county coordinator may also be able to intervene if calls are not returned.

It may be necessary to note the lack of responsiveness in the next CASA Court Report.

What do volunteers do when a foster parent/parent/guardian doesn't want to have CASA volunteers visit the children? Sometimes foster parents, biological parents, or even guardians may not want CASA volunteers to visit the children. There are a number of reasons, some are:

- They may not clearly understand the role of CASA volunteers.
- They may think that having one more person visit would add to additional disruption in the home.
- There may be some control issues.
- Possibly they don't want volunteers to know what's going on in the home
- Any placement issues should be addressed with the case manager or licensing worker
- It may be inconvenient for the foster parents, biological parents, or guardians, to visit when the volunteer wants.
- Possibly the volunteer is visiting once a week and impeding the foster parents, biological parents, or guardian's regular daily schedule.

It is imperative that CASA volunteers explain their role in the case. There are a number of reasons that may need to be addressed.

Scheduled visits are best and most convenient for all, but sometimes it may be necessary to do a surprise visit (if it is safe to do so). Visiting a child at daycare or school is an option to visiting at the foster parent's, biological parents, or guardian's home. However, visiting at daycare centers or school should only be used to supplement home visits, not replace them.

Another possibility to help resolve a visiting issue, is have a mentor volunteer go with the assigned volunteer to the home. It lends support to the volunteer as well as another person actively listening to what's really going on.

If there are still issues around volunteers visiting, the issue may need to be brought up in a more formal way. The volunteer may request a staffing or, if possible, a mediation between parties to resolve the issue of the volunteer visiting the children in the placement home.

COMMENDATIONS

CASA volunteer **Pam Frye**, was commended by the Foster Care Review Board for her dedicated efforts on behalf of her CASA children. Great job Pam!

Angela Ashley was commended by the Foster Care Review Board for her active advocacy efforts. Way to go Angela!

CASA volunteer **Lori Sipple** was commended by the judge and attorneys for her good report and for the good job she is doing on her case. Keep up the good work Lori!

Ellen Starkeson, CASA volunteer was commended by the Foster Care Review Board for all the time that she spends with her CASA child and the excellent insights that she provides. Awesome work Ellen!

Hats off to **Jolene Cook** for her great CASA work. All parties agree and commended her at the last RNR for looking out for the whole family. Great job Jolene!

The Foster Care Review Board highly commended CASA **Ray Cheroske** and the team of competent professionals involved in his case. All went above and beyond their responsibilities to make family reunification possible. Way to go Ray!

Great job **Jennifer Boucek**! Commissioner Gerst was so impressed with the job Jennifer did finding a relative placement for her CASA child, she appointed her in court to the sibling in the case. (Jennifer is almost nine months pregnant). Good luck!

A POEM FOR VOLUNTEERS

from the Tyler, TX VIP Newsletter

Valuable is the work you do,
Outstanding in how you always come through.
Loyal, sincere and full of good cheer,
Untiring in your efforts throughout the year;
Notable are the contributions you make,
Trustworthy in every project you take.
Eager to reach your every goal,
Effective in the way you fulfill your role.
Ready with a smile like a shining star,
Special and wonderful--that's what your are!



-Quote from a foster child during a conversation about what she might want her CASA to tell the judge regarding her adoption..."Foster care is like being in a wheelchair your whole life and then you get to get adopted and you can step out of your chair and go anywhere. Wheelchairs help you but you aren't free."

This child has been in foster care for 6 years and will be adopted by the foster mom with whom she has lived for 5 years. She will be adopted in August.



CASA PROGRAM
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TWO CHILDREN

Anonymous

Two Children,
 Same family,
 Same neighborhood,
 Same school,
 Same stress,

Same neglect,
 Same abuse,
 Sullen, withdrawn,
 One shrinks,
 The other grows,
 Warm, popular.

One finds nourishment, the other hardens.

What is the difference?

One found a caring adult,
 The other did not,
 One was encouraged,
 The other was not,
 One was expected to succeed,
 The other was assumed to fail.
 One pops back, one stays down.
 Both are children.
 Both are the future.